

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. PITTS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

TRAFFICKING GRANT

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, The Washington Post uncovered astonishing evidence that political appointees at the Department of Health and Human Services meddled with a grant to help victims of human trafficking. For 5 years, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has provided these services. Now The Post has revealed that the grant renewal was denied over the objections of career staff and despite the recommendation of an independent review board that rated the Catholic program as the best agency to do the work. In fact, some career staff within HHS refused to sign the documents awarding the new grants. It cannot be a coincidence that the ACLU is suing to force the Catholic bishops to offer abortion services with this grant money.

It is outrageous that the administration appears to be letting the ACLU dictate policy and interfere with a grantee that is doing good work. Victims of trafficking will now face a reduced level of service because of political meddling.

A complaint has been referred to the HHS inspector general. I hope there will be a thorough investigation determining whether religious bigotry played a role in this grant decision.

THE SUPERCOMMITTEE AND JOBS

(Mr. HIGGINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, this week the partisan chairs of the previous deficit reduction commissions admonished the supercommittee to "go big" with a package that includes a

balance of cuts and revenues. Unfortunately, I think they will "go small," and that would be a tragic lost opportunity. It would also be a lost opportunity if the supercommittee's legislation does not include job-creating measures, because the best way to reduce deficits is to create jobs.

Just ten years ago, the debate in this country was over the implications of repaying our debt in its entirety. We had that debate because, under President Clinton, 22 million jobs were created and record deficits were turned into record surpluses.

Mr. Speaker, the supercommittee should be bold and include a major investment in infrastructure. With interest rates at historic lows, it will never be cheaper to finance the massive backlog of improvements that we need to make in order to stay competitive.

Optimistically, economic growth over the next 2 years is not expected to be enough to sustain the current employment levels. That means unemployment will increase unless we act to create jobs.

I urge the supercommittee to do the right thing—go big. The American people need to work, and much work needs to be done.

POLL SHOWS SMALL BUSINESSES FEAR REGULATIONS

(Mr. HULTGREN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, last week I was astounded to read a new Gallup Poll on small business owners' concerns; and as you can imagine, in an economy like this, they have many concerns. But the issue that they said was the most important concern for small business owners was complying with government regulation.

You know what? I didn't need a Gallup Poll to tell me what I've heard from dozens of small business owners across my district. They feel threatened by the Obama administration's avalanche of needless red tape.

In the House, we've worked hard to cut that red tape, provide a pro-growth, pro-jobs environment here. We've passed more than 15 bills to cut red tape, most of them with bipartisan support. You can see all of them at jobs.gop.gov. Unfortunately, they now languish over in the cul-de-sac at the other end of this building called the "do-nothing" Senate.

So I urge the Senate to listen to American small business owners, listen to their concerns. Pass the forgotten 15. Get Washington off the backs of small business and get Americans working again.

ACT NOW TO PUT AMERICANS BACK TO WORK

(Ms. TSONGAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, 10 months ago this week, Republicans took control of the House of Representatives. Since then, we have not seen one comprehensive jobs bill to help put Americans back to work. Our GOP-led House must show urgency, where now they show indifference, in helping the millions of workers who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own.

The American Jobs Act will help create those jobs by investing in infrastructure and incentivizing businesses to hire new workers.

I have also proposed a plan to help put people back to work; and many others in this Chamber, both Republican and Democrat, have other great ideas to support job creation. But the majority has thus far refused to allow any such measures to come to the floor for consideration. They are common-sense and traditionally bipartisan steps that we should take today.

People need jobs, they need them now, and Congress must not delay any further.

DEFENSE CUTS INCREASING UNEMPLOYMENT BY 1 PERCENT

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta recently warned Congress that if the deficit reduction process does not succeed, the Department of Defense could be cut by \$1 trillion. These cuts will threaten the effectiveness of the world's greatest Armed Forces which provide peace through strength. According to Secretary Panetta, these cuts would increase America's unemployment rate by 1 percent, nearly 1.5 million workers. Drastic cuts will limit advanced equipment that is essential to protect our servicemembers who are defeating terrorists overseas.

For the United States to successfully continue to protect its families, Congress should not further cut the defense budget, which destroys jobs and undermines our manufacturing base. Yesterday in Roll Call, Army Secretary John McHugh, our former colleague, advised, "We can't break faith with the men and women who fought for us during the past decade."

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

VOTER SUPPRESSION

(Ms. FUDGE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the right of every American, and that is the right to vote.